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## **Sanborn Bill Creates Felony Charge for Impersonating a Police Officer**

*Bill will make impersonating an officer a felony offense under certain circumstances*

(LANSING) – Senator Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond, announced today that Senate Bill 118 passed unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. If signed into law, the bill will amend the Michigan Code of Criminal Procedure so that under certain circumstances, individuals impersonating a police officer could be charged with a felony punishable by up to four years in prison or a fine of up to two thousand dollars, or both.

Under current law, it is a misdemeanor violation to impersonate an officer and time is served concurrent with time for any other offense. With the adoption of Senate Bills 118 and companion bill 117, it would be a felony offense if the individual posing as a police officer used the deception to commit or attempt to commit another serious crime. A sentence for the felony charge of impersonating an officer could be served consecutively with the time for the additional crime.

“This legislation makes clear the seriousness of impersonating a police officer in the commission of other crimes,” Sanborn said. “This legislation will give the courts the discretion to charge a suspect with a felony rather than a misdemeanor if the seriousness of the offense that was facilitated by the impersonation warrants it.”

Macomb County Sheriff, Mark A. Hackel testified in support of the bill, citing incidents in Harrison Township and in other areas of Macomb County in which individuals impersonated a police officer in order to commit a crime.

Other such incidents involving individuals using badges or posing as a police officer have been reported across Michigan and throughout the country. There were 16 such cases reported in Southeastern Michigan alone, in 2000 and 2001.

**(More)**

“Many people do not think to question a person with a badge or uniform and are more vulnerable to attack or deception by an impersonator,” Sanborn said. “This legislation is an attempt to provide greater protection, through deterrence, of citizens from criminals who might otherwise play upon our trust of law enforcement officers in order to rob, defraud or injure us.”

Senate Bill 117, was also unanimously passed by the judiciary committee, it outlines the sentencing guidelines for the offense of impersonating a police officer. Both bills will move to the full Senate for consideration.

Senator Alan Sanborn is a member of the Judiciary Committee and was formerly a youth probation officer for 20 years. He represents the 11<sup>th</sup> District which includes northern Macomb County as well as Harrison Township and Mount Clemens.

**Editor's Note: A downloadable photograph of Senator Sanborn and Sheriff Hackel testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee is available on the Senate photowire at:**  
<http://www.senate.state.mi.us/gop/photowire/Sanborn/Sanborn.htm>